

A new year filled with opportunities and challenges is before us once again. It's important to know where we're heading, and how we'll get there, as we start on the journey that will take us through 2005 — that is the purpose of goals. Page 2.

First Look

Idol contest

The Lajes/USAFE Idol contest is at 9 p.m. Saturday at the Top of the Rock Club.

Flea market

The next flea market is from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday at the Lajes Youth Center, Bldg. T-240. For more information, call 2-4135.

Rising VI meeting

The monthly Rising VI meeting is at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Sun and Sand Hut.

Dodgeball

A dodgeball tournament will be from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Feb. 26 at the high school gym. For six-person teams and e-mail team and players' names to Master Sgt. Michael Schmick at Michael.schmick@lajes.af.mil by Feb. 25 to register.

Display art

The City Hall of Praia is looking for Americans stationed at Lajes Field who want to display photos of the island, paintings, drawings or even sculptures, in Praia's Theater throughout the next couple of months. Individuals interested in participating in these local exhibits should contact Ed Lima at 2-3413 or e-mail eduardo.lima@lajes.af.mil.

Center re-opens

The Chace Fitness Center re-opened Wednesday. All equipment will be fully functional by Saturday.

Preflight

■ *Days since last DUI.. 30*
 ■ *DUIs since Jan. 1..... 1*
 ■ *Current AEF..... 3 & 4*
 ■ *Current FPCON..... Alpha*
 ■ *Combat Nighthawk: Capt. Adam Huhn, 65th Medical Operations Squadron; Master Sgt. Pamela Jacobs, 65th Communications Squadron*



Team Lajes members participated in the U.S. Air Forces in Europe's push-up challenge here. Together, they did 5,363 push-ups in 10 minutes and raised more than \$2,000 Feb. 10 to help fund the new Berlin to Baghdad Wing at the Enlisted Heritage Hall on Gunter Annex in Montgomery, Ala.

Berlin to Baghdad contest Team Lajes push out 5,363 push ups

By 1st Lt. Aaron Wiley
Deputy chief, public affairs

Lajes participants of U.S. Air Forces in Europe's push-up challenge here pushed themselves off the ground 5,363 times in 10 minutes and raised more than \$2,000 Feb. 10 to help fund the new Berlin to Baghdad Wing at the Enlisted Heritage Hall on Gunter Annex in Montgomery, Ala.

The wing's first place winners in the USAFE-wide fundraiser for each of the challenge's eight categories will receive a wing trophy and have their push-up totals sent to USAFE to compete against the rest of the major command, while the money raised will go to help fund the new 3,700 square-foot addition to the Enlisted Heritage Hall.

Contestants each paid \$2 and were encouraged to collect pledges per push-up for a prize awarded to the organization that raised the most money.

"The contest went very well, but I think everyone was surprised at just how hard it was to do push-ups for 10 minutes. Most people were unable to do as many as they thought they could," said Senior Master Sgt. David Pate, Lajes B2B push-up challenge representative. "I know, I missed my goal of 200 by 12 push-ups, and the last 40 I did complete were not very pretty!"

"We presented awards for the top three finishers in team and individual categories, but only the first place finishers will have their results sent up to compete at the USAFE level," he said. "As soon as all the money is collected from the sponsors, we will be presenting another award to the unit that collected the most money."

According to Sergeant Pate, the most interesting thing was how many push-ups Senior Master Sgt. Karen Thomas, 65th Services Squadron, the only female who participated in the 36+ category, did.

"She cranked out 214 push-ups to win her category and beat the majority of the men," said Sergeant Pate. There were 32 total male and female competitors, he said.

Sergeant Thomas credits her daily workout routine for her endurance.

"I usually run 5-6 miles every morning," she said. "I go with my husband for one hour, and on Sunday I run 13-14 miles with Tech. Sgt. Kavina Agnew from CE."

"Every other morning, when I finish running, I usually do 300 reps of sit-ups, and 100 push-ups," she said.

Sergeant Thomas' personal best of 70



USAFE

Airman Information File

February 2005

Setting Goals — Moving in the Right Direction!

A new year filled with opportunities and challenges is before us once again. It's important to know where we're heading, and how we'll get there, as we start on the journey that will take us through 2005 — that is the purpose of goals.

Goals may be national, organizational, or personal. Their purpose, at all levels, is the same — they give us a target to shoot for! If we don't set goals, we don't know what we're aiming for and have no idea if or when we hit the target.

Here are just a few of our goals in USAFE for 2005:

- * Facilitate OEF/OIF support through the correct positioning/utilization of USAFE assets
- * Continue to expand our USAFE Cooperation Team Concept to exploit every opportunity to support the GWOT through security cooperation
- * Execute Weapons Training Deployments

to locations that support AFE 2020

- * Finalize the structure, organization, & roles/responsibilities of our Warfighting Headquarters

- * Implement a two year Dormitory Project to identify and support those high payoff / low cost projects in our dorms to improve the quality of living for our dorm residents

- * Continue to mature USAFE University to identify/correct gaps and redundancy in our training and education

- * Achieve IOC on the Combat Support Center of Excellence, the Joint Fires Center of Excellence and an Air-to-Air Center of Excellence, & introduce NATO/EUCOM members

We would never leave on a long family vacation without a destination or purpose in mind. This could lead quickly to wasted time, frustration and disappointment instead of enjoyment. We do a similar thing when we fail to set personal goals for our future. As we begin

the new year, take time to establish personal goals. Ask yourself what you want to accomplish this year. It could be a physical goal like improving on your fitness test, or a mental goal like starting or completing an advanced academic degree program, or maybe a professional goal such as acing a promotion exam. Whatever you choose — begin your journey with a destination in mind!

Don't lose focus on your goals after you create them. It's easy to establish goals and then quickly forget them as we react to the fires of the day. Always keep your goals in mind. If the goal is long-term, establish shorter goals that will help you measure your progress as you stay on target.

Don't give up! Some goals will be easy while others may take a long time to achieve. We may become discouraged along the way and experience setbacks in our plans, but keep pressing ahead — the rewards are worth it!

General Doc Foglesong

CMSgt Gary Coleman



Tech. Sgt. Charles Brown, 65th Communications Squadron sings Amazing Grace during the National Prayer luncheon Feb. 11 at the Top of the Rock Club.



Prayer luncheon

Chaplain (Col.) Steve Frick, the USAFE Command Chaplain, was the guest speaker for the National Prayer luncheon Feb. 11 at the Top of the Rock Club. The luncheon is an annual event observed by the President, members of Congress, and other military and civic leaders as an important reminder of the religious heritage of America. Nearly 130 people attended the luncheon. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Michelle Michaud)

Movin' right along:

Expeditionary logistics team carries the load

**Story and photos by
Capt. Catie Hague
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – They “move the mission,” keeping the busiest airfield in Afghanistan operational.

They are the men and women of the 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, and their job is to support all airlift coming in and out of Bagram, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“Last month we pushed more than 10,000 passengers and 12 million pounds of cargo,” said Maj. Rich Fillman, 455th ELRS commander. “Per day, that translates into about 300 hundred people and 334,000 pounds of supplies.

“There’s very little down time,” Maj. Fillman said, “we average one aircraft on the ground every hour, ‘round the clock.”

With seven functional areas, to include the passenger terminal, transient alert, supply, fuels, transportation management, vehicle maintenance and the air terminal operations center, the main focus of the ELRS is the ATOC – uploading and downloading passengers and cargo.

“As soon as an aircraft lands, we find out what’s coming off the plane, we get on our forklifts and head out to the aircraft,” said Airman 1st Class Rodney Calloway, 455th ELRS air transportation specialist. “When the loadmaster opens

the door, we drive up to the back of the plane and remove the cargo as quickly and safely as possible.”

It usually takes about 15 minutes to download a C-130 carrying six pallets.

“We try to cycle through our five forklifts,” said Airman Carlos Reyes, 455th ELRS air transportation specialist. “It’s cold out here and most of our trucks are convertibles. Our hands and feet tend to get numb, so we drive for about two or three hours and then switch drivers.”

The logistics teams’ ultimate goal is to move aircraft in and out without delay due to “security reasons and limited parking,” said Airman Calloway.

While some of the cargo and passengers traveling to Bagram terminate here, the rest are re-palletized and re-manifested for transport to other locations.

“We move the mission not only for the Air Force, but for the Army, Marines, Navy and our Coalition partners as well,” said Maj. Fillman.

“The next three months will be the busiest at Bagram this year,” he said. “The Army is rotating, and we’ll be pushing over 30,000 troops in and out of Bagram to include tons of equipment and supplies.”

As Airman Reyes said, it’s the duty of the ELRS to get things where they need to be, when they need to be there, all in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“Bottom line,” said Maj. Fillman, “without the 455th ELRS, the mission at Bagram stops.”



BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan— Major Rich Fillman (right), commander 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron and Staff Sgt. Robert King prepare to tow a C-130. Major Fillman is deployed from Lajes Field, Portugal and Sergeant King is deployed from McChord Air Force Base, Wash.



STEP promoted

Staff Sgt. Kerri Marroquin, 65th Communications Squadron, is all smiles as she stands with her daughters Grace and Faith and her husband, Wernher, after she received a STEP promotion from Third Air Force to technical sergeant Tuesday at the base theatre. The Stripes for Exceptional Performers program was integrated into the Air Force in 1982. The purpose of the program is to promote airmen with exceptional potential and unique circumstances to the rank of E-5 through E-7, according to the STEP guidelines. (Photos by Airman 1st Class Josie Kemp)

Traffic laws not negotiable

By Capt. Yvonne Levardi
Chief, public affairs

While road construction near the post office is ongoing, drivers at Lajes Field must go one of two different ways to get to the commissary, Base Exchange and other facilities near the Beira Mar gate. One way is to use the street that runs past the walking gate – Rua do Atlantico.

But, according to 65th Security Forces personnel, many drivers are ignoring one important traffic law at that intersection.

"People aren't stopping at the stop signs near the walking gate," said Maj. Mike Green, 65th SFS commander. "In many cases, they aren't even slowing down. There may be a misconception that because the gate doesn't allow vehicle traffic, the stop signs don't apply. That's not true, and it places those who use the walking gate at great risk."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety and Administration, 3,470 pedestrians were killed in 2003 by motorists failing to stop at posted stop signs.

"When approaching a stop sign, yielding, rolling through or just slowing down is unlawful and decreases safe traffic flow," said Staff Sgt. Jean-Pierre Lapre, NCOIC, 65th SFS Reports and Analysis. "Just because the person in front of you may not have stopped doesn't mean you don't have to."

According to Sergeant Lapre, other posted stop signs that are often ignored are next to Bldg. T-100, near the base theater and at the intersection between the education center and swimming pool.

"Getting a ticket on base isn't a laughing matter," Sergeant Lapre said. "Your name is put into a security forces database for three years, and that record will follow you. The information is also auto-

matically linked to a system used by the FBI."

Additionally, if the member is issued an Air Base No. 4 citation, four points are added to their driving record.

"Eight points is all it takes to have your driving privileges revoked for a minimum of one month," the sergeant said.

The consequences of failing to stop at a posted stop sign are quite costly off base. According to the Portuguese traffic code, running a stop sign can result in driving privileges revoked from one month to one year and the fine is a minimum of • 99.76 and the maximum of • 498.80 imposed by local civilian authorities.

"Simply put, the risk of punishment and most importantly, the risk of endangering human lives are not worth failing to stop," Sergeant Lapre said.

"Driving is a privilege most motorists take for granted," Major Green said. "Each action behind the wheel is a series of conscious choices to respect the law or a

Heavier fines en route

Next month, new traffic laws will go into effect in Portugal that will raise fines for driving under the influence of alcohol, speeding, using a cell phone while driving and other offenses. There will be more cases when a person's license can be taken such as stopping or parking on a crosswalk. Some violations that were only subject to fines will increase and include losing the license.

chance to recklessly disregard your safety and the safety of others. If you choose the latter, you'll lose your driving privileges."

For more information regarding Lajes Field motor vehicle traffic information refer to LFI 31-204/Motor Vehicle Traffic Supervision or contact Sergeant Lapre at 2-3428.



Among several other places on base, many drivers are ignoring the stop sign at Rua do Atlantico street, the intersection that runs past the walking gate. The consequences of failing to stop at a posted stop sign can result in driving privileges revoked from one month to one year and the fine is a minimum of • 99.76 and the maximum of • 498.80 imposed by local civilian authorities. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Olenda Kleffner)

ALS graduates 30 Senior Airmen

The Airman Leadership School Class 05-B will graduate 30 Senior Airmen at 6 p.m. today at the Top of the Rock Club.

The ALS mission is to prepare senior airmen to accept greater responsibility as first line supervisors and rating officials by providing them with the necessary tools to carry out this responsibility.

Falcon Flight graduates:

James Brewster, 729th Air Mobility Squadron

Brandi Davis, 65th Mission Support Squadron

Juan Gonzalez, 65th Operations Support Squadron

Cory Goulet, 65th Civil Engineer Squadron

Lisa Hohensee, 729th AMS

Sherri Kidd, 729th AMS

Jared Lambert, 65th CES

Kurt Lugar, 65th Security Forces Squadron

Edward Mueller, 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Kristopher Powers, 65th CES

Laura Rupert, 65th Air Base Wing

Anthony Smith, 65th CES

Thomas Stockton, 65th Communications Squadron

Jovan Thomas, 65th Medical Operations Squadron

Eagle Flight graduates:

Jessie Berrier, 65th CES

Ryan Bottorf, 65th CES

Tiana Coleman, 65th Services Squadron

Brian Davis, 729th AMS

Jennifer Furr, 65th MDOS

William Gleason, 729th AMS

Alden Moyer II, 65th OSS

Zaire Naylor, 65th CES

Jeremy Radtke, 65th SFS

Carl Rice, 65th CS

Heather Ricks, 65th CS

Jacob Silvia, 65th CES

Bradley Smith, 65th OSS

Michael Vecero, 65th LRS

LOOK SHARP!

According to AFI 36-2903, Airmen will blouse battle dress uniform trousers over combat boots. Material of shirt and trousers must match. Combat boots must be black with plain rounded toe or rounded capped toe and may have a high gloss or patent finish.





Exchange class experience

Students visit Portuguese, American facilities

By Eduardo Lima
Community relations adviser

Nearly 20 Portuguese students and two teachers from the Albergaria-a-Velha High School, mainland Portugal, visited Air Base No. 4 and Lajes Field on a student exchange visit, Feb. 10

The eleventh-grade students and teachers from Albergaria-a-Velha County located near the city of Aveiro were accompanied by several students and their teacher from the local school Vitorino Nemésio in Praia da Vitoria.

The students visited some Air Base No. 4 and joint operation facilities including the Aircraft Squadron 711; Radio Lajes, the only Portuguese military radio station; the control tower; and they saw a demonstration by the Portuguese Air Force's military working dogs.

They also visited the 65th Air Base Wing's facilities, including the Hillside Lanes bowling center and Burger King, the 65th Civil Engineering Squadron fire department and the library.

"This one-week school-exchange visit has both cultural and entertainment purposes, besides offering the students an opportunity to meet new people and learn about other regions' customs and traditions," said Maria da Conceição Esculcas, the teacher from Praia High School. "Our class will reciprocate the visit March 17-19 when we visit their school and county also with the objective of enriching the students' knowledge."

According to student Diana Mendonça, this exchange brings many benefits for both classes.

"This is a good way for us to meet other

students from different regions and learn new experiences. It's good that we have these meetings," she said.

Ana Bernadete, one of the two mainland teachers who accompanied the students was also very pleased with the visit.

"We are enjoying this visit very much. It's an interesting experience in terms of culture, knowledge and history. This was the first time we visited the Azores and the first time we participated in a school-exchange program," the teacher said.

The idea of visiting Air Base 4 and Lajes Field came from both schools' classes.

"I think this was a mutual idea. The students had expressed the desire to visit the base since Lajes Air Base is well-known and much talked about on the mainland, Ms. Bernadete added. "We liked what we saw and we are glad we had the chance to come here to visit,"

According to the mainland teacher, although these types of visits are highly encouraged and educational, they are not easy to accomplish.

"Even though we received some monetary help from our city hall, it was not enough. The students and teachers had to carry out many fundraiser activities throughout the year and spend money from their own pockets to come to the island," Ms. Bernadete said.

The mainland students also benefited from the visit to the base.

"I'm enjoying the visit to the island and the base. The island is very pretty and the visit to the base was very fascinating and very different from what we are used to seeing on mainland Portugal," said Cátia Ribeiro, one of the students.



(Above) Edgar Sousa, student at Vitorino Nemésio High School, lets the ball go while he waits for his classmates to finish their meal at the Hillside Lanes bowling center/AAFES Burger King combined facility.

(Top) Staff Sgt. Phillip Burns, 65th CES, explains to Portuguese high school students how to operate the fire truck and fight fires. (Photos by 1st. Lt. Aaron Wiley)

Program allows full-time study while on active duty

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. (AFPN) — A program allowing active-duty enlisted Airmen to attend college full time without loss of pay or benefits, and graduate with both a degree and a commission might just be the best kept secret in the Air Force, officials said.

"It's easily one of the best programs in the Air Force, and not a lot of people know about it," said Maj. Gregory Nelms, an instructor and the admissions officer with University of Oklahoma's Air Force ROTC Detachment 675.

"You stay on active duty while going to school with full pay and benefits and a full scholarship. Where's the down side?"

The Airman Education and Commissioning Program gives eligible Airmen up to three years to complete a technical, nursing, foreign language or area studies bachelor's degree and then be commissioned as a second lieutenant. Master's degree tracks are also available.

"A lot of people have goals of getting their degree and a commission; with this program you can accomplish both at the same time," Major Nelms said.

"I was going to school part time at Rose State (College in Midwest City, Okla.) and planned on transferring here at some point," said Cadet John Demster, who has 16 years of service and is in his final semester studying chemical engineering at OU. "It was taking way too long to get through school taking one or two classes at a time."

Cadet Demster was a technical sergeant in the 552nd Air Control Wing before applying to the program.

Cadet Daniel Snodgrass, who was a staff sergeant with the 960th Airborne Air Control Squadron, will graduate in 2006 with a degree in electrical engineering. He has been in the Air Force about six and a half years.

"One of my personal goals is to get a degree, but I wasn't getting it done between deployments, (temporary duties) and the demands of my work schedule," Cadet Snodgrass said. "So the quickest way and best way I found to do that was to apply to the AECF."

Cadet Michael Lukawski, a master sergeant in 552nd Air Control Wing, will complete his mechanical engineering degree this spring.

The cadets said they agree there have been big changes in their lifestyles going from the daily environment of an Air Force base to a college campus.

"When you go from the military environment to a public university classroom it's an eye opener," said Cadet Lukawski. "We're in our 30s, and the average college student ... well, isn't."

Major Nelms said being on a college campus is a very unique environment for these nontraditional students, and he often calls on them in class to share their

real-life military experiences with their fellow cadets.

"One of the things I decided to do was to treat this as a job," Cadet Snodgrass said. "I come here early in the morning, and I don't leave until early afternoon — no matter when my classes are or how many I have during the day because I want to get all my studying done here."

Besides earning college degrees, the cadets also appreciate that the program has allowed them to spend more time with their families since they are not deployed.

"I've been able to see my daughter grow up," Cadet Lukawski said.

The cadets said they also appreciate being able to provide for their families' needs because they continue to receive their full pay and health benefits and access to all services on base, and will not have to worry about paying off any student loans when they are done.

"There's no way I could have done it full time," Cadet Demster said. "I could have gotten out of the military and gone to school, but when you've got a house and a family you've got to pay the bills. This was a great opportunity for me."

To qualify for the program, applicants should have at least one year in service and on station, both of which are waivable, and 45 earned college credit hours, up to 15 of which can be earned through testing.

Applicants for the technical, foreign language and area studies majors who reach age 30 on or before April 1 will need to submit an age waiver for review to assure they can complete their studies before their 35th birthday. Nursing major applicants can be commissioned up to age 47 with an age waiver.

Last year, 78 percent of those who applied to the technical fields were accepted, 88 percent of the nursing candidates were accepted, and 53 percent of the applicants in the other areas were accepted.

New cadets continue to receive pay at the level of their enlisted rank, with all cadets receiving minimum pay as a staff sergeant.

During the program, cadets attend school year round, including summer terms, except when they are attending summer field training.

"Their job is to go to school as a full-time college student," Major Nelms said.

Cadets may attend any school with an ROTC program or fulfill their degree requirements at one campus and travel to another with a detachment to fulfill their ROTC requirements.

The application deadline for fall 2005 enrollment is March 1.

"If you've done well in school before, you've got a pretty good shot at getting into this program," Major Nelms said. "As long as you can commission prior to age 35, don't let anyone tell you that you can't do this."

For more information, go to <http://www.afots.af.mil/afrotc/enlistedcommissioning/FY05%20aecp.htm>.

Members must adhere to war trophy restrictions

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (USAFENS) — Throughout history, soldiers have come home with souvenirs from battle.

Many of these war-related items end up on display in museums and showcases.

Although it's tempting to bring back reminders of service in a military campaign, with few exceptions, taking or retaining individual souvenirs or trophies is prohibited.

"It is against the law to take certain souvenirs from a war zone," said 1st Lt. Andrew Ignash, 2nd Air Postal Squadron postal operations flight commander. "There are Department of Defense restrictions as well."

It is important for military personnel to understand there are strict guidelines regarding the transportation of war trophies.

"You can go to jail for mailing an illegal object," said Lieutenant Ignash.

Shipping weapons as personal property is an offense punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, he said. War trophies, defined as enemy weapons, ammunition, explosives or items of equipment, are non-mailable. This includes live or spent rounds, pistols, machine guns, weapons magazines and anti-personnel mines.

Most munitions and military articles of equipment may not be mailed; however, war trophies that obviously pose no safety risk, such as enemy uniform items and flags, may be mailed, said Lieutenant Ignash.

"If you're unsure whether an item can be legally imported, don't try to mail it," said Tech. Sgt. Craig Thomas, 2nd AIRPS command postal manager. "Ask your postmaster to clarify the rules, follow the regulations as written and there should be no problem."

Almost all parcels move as cargo on commercial airliners, said Sergeant Thomas. Mailing war trophies can cause mail delays, bomb evacuations and confiscation of parcels, which occurs when mail containing a war trophy is X-rayed by foreign governments and airline carriers.

People should not mail items that are made from weapons parts or articles that resemble weapons as they may cause flight delays, mail stoppage, and bomb scares, said Steve Waller, 2nd AIRPS command official mail manager.

"If an X-ray could show that it may be dangerous to the passengers of a plane, it shouldn't be mailed," Mr. Waller said. "Foreign countries could stop military mail flow through their country altogether if they believe that military parcels threaten their aircraft."

"Mailing weapons, even non-functional replicas, is an unsafe and illegal practice," he continued. "For example, shell casing or bullet belt buckles, hand grenade paperweights, pistols mounted on plaques and so on could cause an international incident, delay the mail and could even put the mailer in a foreign jail."

Airmen with questions about what can be mailed should contact their post office, customs office or legal office.



Team Lajes' core values in action

Tech. Sgt. Andrew Henne
65th Civil Engineer Squadron

Many speak and write of our Air Force core values, but it took a dark and stormy island night for me to witness and truly understand those core values in action.

The weather, violent and nasty, blew the rain sideways as it often does on Terceira. A thick fog bank had crept in, reducing visibility to zero.

This created an interesting environment to fly in, particularly if you were a fighter pilot trying to corral a fighter jet safely to solid ground on a rock in the middle of the Atlantic.

Earlier that day firefighters had been watching quite an air show as a gaggle of Navy F-18 Hornets transited in, providing excitement for those on the ground as they struggled to line up on Lajes' runway. The wind slamming across the runway proved to be a challenge for the small aircraft, despite Navy pilot adeptness at landing in violently windy conditions on wave-bounced carriers. One Hornet broke out of the clouds and realized he wasn't lined up on the runway. A quick jerk of the stick and he was able to wrestle the fighter back and safely touch down. Several Hornets aborted their landings and circled around for second and even third attempts. One fighter blew a main gear tire as it touched earth and rolled down the runway.

Thankfully, the jet was traveling slowly enough that the pilot was able to control it, taxi off the runway and shut down in front of our firehouse.

But the real story happened after nightfall. That evening the primary crash phone in the fire house alarm center jumped to life and we were dispatched to an in-flight emergency on four Hornets who were low on fuel; a true emergency in any pilot's playbook.

As the drama played out, it became clear that the Hornets couldn't see to land due to the weather. This put them in a dangerous pickle; they had to land because thirsty fighter jets don't run well on fuel vapors. To make things worse, the night sky was black – there was no moonlight.

Moments earlier, the electricity had fluctuated and I had watched the runway and taxiway lights go completely black, slowly relighting as civil engineering's powerful backup generators kicked in.

I walked quickly to my blue Explorer, climbed in and drove out of the station, my truck assaulted by the ferocious wind.

Red, white and blue warning beacons

bounced off cars and buildings as I steered towards the flight line. I noted with satisfaction that our crash, rescue and engine companies were rapidly departing the station, lights blazing. I was amazed to see the massive, multi-ton vehicles being rocked by the wind.

I turned on the UHF radio waiting for it to warm up and find its preprogrammed channels. If pilots were in trouble, I needed to be able to hear what they and the tower were talking about. The UHF found a frequency lock and I listened to the tense chatter between the Hornets and the tower.

I felt for them and the predicament they found themselves in. These guys were riding the edge – caught between no gas and an invisible runway far below them. The tension and stress of the situation was evident in their voices, consummate professionals as they are. They were faced with alarmingly few choices. They either had to land, find the nearest Exxon station in the sky or depart their aircraft once fuel was gone – not too many viable options.

I can't imagine they were jumping at the chance to test their aircraft's ACES II ejection seats and brave the cold rough waters of the Atlantic. On the radio I heard the Portuguese rescue flight prepping the Puma helicopter and Casa 212 fixed wing aircraft for search and rescue should the Hornets run out of time and gas.

I slowed down at midfield, crash and rescue crews racing for their positions, and heard a distant but growing roar. Vision down the runway with the dense rain and fog was negligible, but that was the direction my senses told me the sound was coming from.

As I radioed to fire dispatch that crews were standing by, the roar became louder and I saw a KC-135R Stratotanker. I watched incredulously as the huge aircraft went screaming past, a massive rooster tail of water chasing it.

I heard the KC pilot radio to the tower that he was in an emergency climb, the thunder of the four Pratt and Whitney turbofans shrill in the background.

I will never forget the tanker's configuration as it launched: That sleek grey jet torpedoed into the dark night sky nose-high like a missile. As fast as it appeared and shot past, the Stratotanker disappeared into the low cloud bank. I remember saying, "Go get'em!" and sending out a quick prayer for everyone's safety.

That KC-135R crew was flying desperately and with urgency to save its Navy comrades. The Exxon station was

on its way.

Listening to the radio I heard the five aircraft vectoring in to each other; like a mama bird trying to corral her errant chicks. The KC's "nest" was waiting and would provide the safety they needed, once they came in contact.

Each fighter pilot was coaxing his hungry Hornet; struggling to make every second of fuel count. Those of us on the ground were anxiously awaiting word of the outcome. Long minutes later the airwaves carried the sweet message of a successful refueling by the Hornets. Shortly thereafter the order was given for diversion to Rota, Spain.

Once the emergency was terminated, I drove back to my second home, the fire house.

I was so proud of so many people that night: the ground crews who raced to get the Stratotanker prepared to launch, the Hornet pilots for sticking it out and for even being there in the first place, protecting the vital interests of our nation.

I was proud of our Portuguese brothers and sisters in arms for racing to get their aircraft in the air should a rescue be needed. I was proud of our firefighters for being trained and prepared for the worst, which thankfully did not come to pass that evening. And finally, I was proud and thankful to God for the KC-135R Stratotanker being on our ramp and fully fueled for its next mission – and its flight crew for launching as aggressively as they did.

You see, it was the dedication of our Airmen – both the tanker crew and our flightline maintainers – and their situational awareness who made it happen that night.

The tanker had come in with the previous F-18s and the crew thought the second group of F-18s might need some help so with the support of our flightline crew, the aircraft was refueled and ready to get off the ground when needed.

We often see and hear our core values: Integrity First; Service Before Self; Excellence In All We Do. These beautiful yet functional words embody our unparalleled and unmatched Air Force, and simply describe what our Air Force is every day. I am a proud member of "The Blue," and will never forget the sight of that thunderous Stratotanker lifting gracefully into the night sky to bring our Navy colleagues home. That night I truly saw our Airmen display the heart of our core values.



Monument represents discovery of the Azores

Question: What's the meaning of the monument on top of Mount Brazil in Angra that has a Portuguese cross on top of it?

Answer: The monument, which has the dates of 1432 and 1932 engraved on its west and east sides respectively, was built in 1932 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the Azores by the Portuguese navigators.

The monument is actually a larger replica of the stone monuments the early Portuguese explorers placed in the territories they

discovered throughout the world to mark their presence.

The site where the concrete monument is located is known to the locals as "Pico das Cruzinhas" (Little Crosses Peak).

This is where the Spanish military installed the gibbets where some of the island's leaders were hanged during the Spanish occupation of the island between 1582 and 1642. The hangings were conducted as retaliation for the resistance carried through by the island's population against the Spanish domain.

This monument site is a

must-visit place, not only for its historical significance, but also for its magnificent panoramic view of the city of Angra and surrounding villages.

It's also the ideal location to observe the nearby island of São Jorge on a clear day.

Besides this panoramic and historical site, Mount Brazil also offers leisure and barbeque areas and a mini zoo with some birds, sheep, goats and deers.

At the base of Mount Brazil, one can also find the large stone walls which harbor the only Portuguese Army unit on the island.



Gas price blues

Question:

Why does the gas price on base keep going up while the state-side average is still below \$2? I thought the gas price should be an average of the U.S. prices, as directed by AAFES.

Answer:

Thanks for asking. AAFES commander Maj. Gen. Kathy Frost, explained how the gas price is set:

The market-based gas policy as approved by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service's Board of Directors sets overseas gas prices based on the previous four or five weeks' Department of Energy average for the equivalent fuel sold in the states. Premium fuel is the only fuel AAFES sells in the Azores. As a result, AAFES must compare "apples to apples" and compare the previous months average price of premium

Commander's Line

ccline@lajes.af.mil
2-4240

The Commander's Line is your direct link to me for suggestions, kudos or as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution. Your chain of command should always be your first option - for praise or problems - but when that's not the answer, call the CC Line at 2-4240 or e-mail ccline@lajes.af.mil. Thank you!

Col. Barbara Jacobi
65th Air Base Wing commander



fuel, plus incremental dispensing costs, to determine the current month's sell price for fuel sold in the Azores.

The sell price for AAFES fuel in the Azores as of Feb. 1 is \$2.119. This price is in concert with the previous month's average, plus incremental dispensing costs of \$.11.

To ensure AAFES customers find gas

prices in line with local U.S. stations the monthly overseas pricing policy is market-based. Market-based pricing means that prices will be based on the DOE average price in the U.S. from the previous month plus incremental costs such as labor and other expenses. Incremental costs are unique to each country.

CROSSROADS

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized weekly publication for members of the U.S. military services overseas.

Contents of the Crossroads are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

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The Crossroads staff encourages its readers to call or e-mail with ideas or corrections. Call 2-3347 to speak to a Crossroads staff member or e-mail us at news@lajes.af.mil.

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Get paid for a good IDEA

Staff Sgt. Shawn Brown
65th Air Base Wing
IDEA Manager

The Innovative Development Employee Awareness program is an incentive program to recognize people for their approved ideas that benefit the government agency by streamlining processes or improving/increasing productivity and efficiency.

Submitters have ownership rights of an idea beginning from when the idea is submitted to up to one year after final approval or disapproval.

Ownership is determined by the first idea to reach the final approval authority.

This protects the submitter from the unauthorized use of their idea by another employee or the government without proper recognition of the originator of the idea.

Submitting an IDEA is very simple. Some may remember the old "AF Suggestion Program" with the AF from 1000. These days, with modern technology, submitting an idea is all web-based.

Individuals, teams or groups may submit an idea through the IDEA Program Data System via the internet at <https://ipds.mont.disa.mil/IPDS>. IPDS is an automated system designed to provide all Air Force users access from any government computer.

Anyone can submit an Air Force idea, however, only Air Force military members, Air Force federal civilian employees and Air Force Academy cadets who are paid from appropriated funds are eligible for cash awards. Private citizens, non-appropriated fund personnel, contractors, retirees (unless the idea was submitted before they retired); employees from outside agencies and National Guard may submit ideas, but they are not eligible for cash awards.

Once the idea is entered into IPDS the process is simple. During the input process, IPDS assigns a number to each IDEA. IPDS then automatically sends it to the managing manpower office which receives a notification via e-mail.

Once notification is received, the manpower analyst accesses IPDS and completes an eligibility review.

The idea is then sent via IPDS to the unit point of contact for the subject of

the idea who then assigns it to an evaluator.

If the base level evaluator can implement the idea, they have the authority to approve or disapprove it as well. If the base level authority evaluator does not have the authority to approve/disapprove the idea, they must provide an evaluation and either recommend approval or disapproval.

If the idea requires MAJCOM level evaluation, it is sent through the IPDS e-mail system to the unit POC for the

subject of the idea who then assigns it to an evaluator and the process continues until a final evaluation decision can be obtained.

Throughout the entire process, the submitter, supervisor, unit POC, evaluator and IDEA analyst receive electronic IPDS notifications explaining where the idea is along in the evaluation process.

If an idea is disapproved, the submitter may request reconsideration

within one year of the date of the final disapproval date. Requests are limited to one per IDEA. If a submitter requests reconsideration of any part of the evaluation it must be combined into one request. The submitter must input a request for reconsideration into IPDS, reference the old idea number and explain in the text portion the reason for the request. After the submitter inputs the request, IPDS automatically sends it to the servicing manpower office via e-mail for eligibility determination.

After the IDEA program manager reviews the request, it is transmitted to a level of authority one level higher than the original disapproval authority. The reconsideration must have additional supporting reasons such as; additional evidence, new material, new information or rationale. A mere disagreement with the decision is not a justification for a reconsideration request.

If the idea is approved, the submitter will receive notification via IPDS e-mail informing them the idea has been approved. The servicing manpower office IDEA program manager prepares the required paperwork for payment. Normally the submitter is recognized at commander's calls or wing award ceremonies.



Everyday Hero

Patricia Botkins

Family Support Center

Duty title: Family Support Center flight chief

Job description: Policy advisor to the installation commander in development and implementation of family programs and service

Time in the Air Force: 25 years as an Air Force spouse and 15 as a civil servant

Time at Lajes: Four years, eight months

Spouse/children/pets: Husband, Randy; daughter, Bridgette Leigh; son, Ryan; dog, Caolee

What's the best aspect of your job: The cooperative synergy of working on a successful community project.

What are your career goals: To become a policy maker in Washington, D.C.

Best Air Force experience: Establishing the first Joint Family Readiness Center in the DoD in 1997.

Life goal: Touching lives and making a difference

Hometown: Greeley, Co.

One word to describe you: Visionary

Hobbies: Golf, skiing, walking and entertaining at our home in Salga Bay

Favorite food: Tandoori/Indian

Favorite color: Purple

Pet peeve: People who are not open and honest

No one knows: I was asked to run for Miss California in 1968

When I was growing up, I wanted to be: a mom

If I could have only one kind of food, it would be: Tofu/Soy

The first thing I would do if I won a \$1,000,000 is: give it to our military families in need

LHS Falcons soar for success in Germany

Nadia Najdawi
Contributing writer

The Lajes High School girls' basketball team and cheerleading squad are traveling to Mannheim Germany Feb. 21 to compete in the 2005 Division IV DoDDS basketball tournament.

Lajes will face competition from other Division IV teams including schools from Milan, Incirlik Air Base, Turkey; Livorno, RAF Alconbury, U.K.; Keflavik AB, Iceland; and Brussels. They kicked off their season the first week of December with eight players, and started playing games in January.

Throughout the season the basketball team has had tough competition playing local high

school teams from Praia and Angra weekly. This year the Lady Falcons have been hard at work for three months, practicing and fundraising in order to make it to Germany and perform successfully.

The girls put forth a lot of dedication determination and discipline in order to better themselves with each game. Coach Eric Ross volunteered his time throughout the season assistant coaching and helped make a great impact in the team's unity, said Coach Brian Daly.

"This season the girls have worked really hard on the fundamentals of the game and working as a team. Hopefully all their hard work will pay off in success during the tournament," said Coach Daly.

The Falcon cheerleaders started training early on in the season as well, including taking yoga classes from the Chase Fitness Center and practicing on weekends.

They received special training and help from their coaches Nadja Evans and Beth Daly, who volunteered their time to assist the girls in preparing for competition.

The cheerleaders provided their support and demonstrated hard-work cheering for games, occasionally two times a week.

In addition to cheering during the guys and girls games, the LHS cheer squad encouraged players with posters and motivating reminders to keep

the Falcon spirit up.

They have prepared a half time routine including dance, stunts, and cheers which they will perform for judges on the last day of the tournament. In addition, they will be judged throughout the tournament on their cheering performance during the games, as well as on their choreographed routine at the end of the tournament.

They will also compete against other cheerleading squads of the same DoDD schools.

Coach Daly said he hopes all the sprints, sit-ups, jumps and dedication put in to the past three months will end to be a memorable season, and hopefully a victory.

CHALLENGE, Page 1

straight push-ups was while she was stationed at Holloman, Air Force Base during a competition at Offut, AFB in 2002 as part of a co-ed team during the first-ever Air Combat Command fitness challenge where they had to run a 5K, do sit-ups and push-ups, participate in an obstacle course and a volleyball tournament.

"We won the challenge," she said.

In the Berlin to Baghdad challenge she said she did push-ups until her "arms turned to jelly."

"My goal was to do 30 a minute, but I think everyone, even the guys, realized that doing that many push-ups a minute for 10 minutes was harder than we anticipated," she said. "I eventually had to settle for 10 push-ups a minute."

According to said Chief Master Sgt. James Kelly, 52 FW/CCC at Spangdahlem Air Base, USAFE B2B push-up challenge coordinator, contestants participated in one of two age categories, 18-35 and 36+, under their appropriate gender specific categories, with individuals able to compete on their own or on three person teams within one of the eight categories. Each wing could have up to 16 winners.

"The competition was simply how many Air Force push-ups folks could gut out in 10 minutes," said Chief Kelly. "The plan (for the Berlin to Baghdad push-up challenge) was for each wing in the command to have their own competition under the umbrella of a command-wide event with the proceeds to go to the En-

Lajes winners of USAFE's push-up challenge:

Male 18-35:

Staff Sgt. Clinton Jordan, 65th Civil Engineer Squadron - 289

Senior Airman Sande Penuliar, Communications Squadron - 264

Airman 1st Class Wade Penry, 65th CES - 235

Female 18-35:

Capt. Carla Lugo, 65th SVS - 165

Staff Sgt. Kerri Marroquin, 65th CS - 146

Staff Sgt. Tabitha Bennett, 65th Operations Support Squadron - 117

Male 36+:

Tech. Sgt. Calvin Wilson, 65th CS - 193

Tech. Sgt. James Heffley, 65th CES - 191

Senior Master Sgt. David Pate, 65th CS - 188

Female 36+:

Senior Master Sgt. Karen Thomas, 65th SVS (only competitor) - 214

Male Team 18-35:

Fire Dawgs+1 - 824

Comm 2 - 542

Comm 1 - 537

Female Team 18-35:

Comm (only team) - 379

Male Team 36+:

LRS Old Timers - 558

Comm Old Timers - 521



Lt. Col. Joseph Martin, 65th Logistics Readiness commander, keeps track of time while trying to do as many push-ups in 10 minutes as he can. (Photo by Guido Melo)

listed Heritage Hall."

According to its website, the U.S. Air Force's Enlisted Heritage Hall offers visitors a unique glimpse at the country's rich history of military aviation and hosts hundreds of people each year who learn from its educational, enlightening and fascinating story.

The mission of the Enlisted Heritage Hall is to preserve the rich and dramatic

heritage and tradition of the enlisted corps of the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Army Aeronautical Division, Air Service, Air Corps and Air Forces in the development of air power to defend the United States.

For more information on the Enlisted Heritage Hall log onto <http://afehri.maxwell.af.mil/pages/tour.htm>. To donate to the Berlin to Baghdad Wing go to the "We need your help link."

